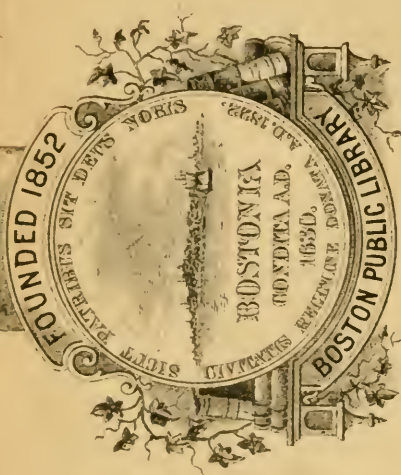


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Phillips Brooks.

A Prophecy of
Manhood's Possibility.

A Tribute to the memory
of the late Right Reverend
PHILLIPS BROOKS, D.D.,
Bishop of the Diocese of
Massachusetts. . . .

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

A Prophecy of
Manhood's Possibility.

BY

JAMES L. GORDON,

General Secretary
of the
Boston Young Men's
Christian Association,
Boston, Mass.

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BOSTON, MASS.
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171 DEVONSHIRE STREET.
1893.

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Rev. E. A. Mullett;

April 10, 1893.

A SPECIAL meeting of young men was held under the auspices of the Boston Young Men's Christian Association, on Wednesday evening, January 25, 1893, to pay a suitable tribute to the memory of the late Phillips Brooks.

Mr. Alphonso S. Covell, the President of the Association, presided, and the Rev. Reuben Kidner, Rector of St. Andrews Episcopal Church, conducted devotional exercises of an appropriate character.

The following resolutions were adopted:—

Resolved, that the tribute to the late Right Reverend Phillips Brooks, D.D., Bishop of Massachusetts, prepared by the General Secretary of our Association and presented at this meeting, be adopted as an expression of the high esteem and loving regard in which we hold the memory of the great soul of whose bodily presence we have been so suddenly bereft.

Resolved, that we instruct the Recording Secretary to engross the same upon the permanent records of the Association.

Tribute.

God's best gift to humanity is a truly great man.

In the character of Phillips Brooks, as he stands among the great men of his own generation, we find an individuality unapproached, unparalleled, and unsurpassed.

God had set this man's heart on fire that he might fire the hearts of men.

He led men to a living Christ, because he lived the Christ-life before men.

Men knew better how he lived than what he believed.

His aim and his desire to face humanity's need was stronger than any disposition to formulate a creed for the faith of humanity.

He loved men, and their love for him was but a reflection of that wealth of heart which he lavished upon all.

The thought of his heart was a thought of love.

He saw that all men agreed as to the great facts of nature, although they could not explain them; and that they differed only as to the theories advanced in their effort to make

the facts plain. So he emphasized that wherein they resembled each other and avoided that which would cause contrast and confusion.

He was the highest type of a mutual friend in the realm of the theological and ecclesiastical.

He spoke in the vocabulary of the heart. He reasoned in the language of love. The logic of his life was an appeal to the heart and conscience.

Others urged the necessity of a revision of creeds, clear thinking—good idealized. This man pleaded for a revision of deeds, clean living—good crystallized.

He turned his face squarely toward the light and squared his life faithfully by the light.

It is the ordained misfortune of a powerful personality to be misunderstood. Shall it be expected that the mountain base shall comprehend the mountain peak? "Have I been so long with thee and hast thou not known me?" said the greatest of men.

His thought toward men was a thought of love. Sympathies as boundless as the sea pulsated in his heart. Thought, like solar suns, flashed in his eye. Prophecies of dawning splendor for our race

seemed to throw a veil over his countenance, so that at times he appeared wholly lost to the present, and altogether alive to the distant and the eternal.

A kingly man; a king among men; a ruling spirit in the realm of the soul.

Since Columbus touched the shores of a new world there has not arisen a man so worthy of the revered appellation, "Prophet and Priest."

He was the incarnation of a great spirit. His manhood was a prophecy of manhood's possibility. Like the prophets of old he walked

upon the very mountain top. His fixed and upward gaze pointed humanity upward toward the throne.

He was unlike most of us, because he was most like all of us. His individuality was our own emphasized. All men loved him, because every man discovered in him his own cherished characteristics blended, and at their best, in his great individuality.

Men standing in any one of the four arcs of humanity's circle and looking inward toward the centre, discovered, each, his own best and brightest ray of individuality concentrated in this one great in-

candescent ray, burning with heat and living with light.

This man's modest estimate of his own soul was unconsciously his measure of the sons of men. He believed in men because he believed in himself. He believed in men as he believed in himself. His faith in men begat faith in the hearts of men. Men loved him because he loved them. They gladly labored with him since he always labored for them.

He was a burning and a shining light. There rested upon him a tongue of living fire. God had touched his heart. There throbbed

within him a heart of fire. There fell from his lips words of fire. There leaped from his brain messages of fire. And from his eyes there flashed forth thought winged with flame. He had an unction from the Holy One.

He seemed to discover in the heart of the most depraved the germ of a possible Christ; the unextinguished and inextinguishable spark of divinity.

He possessed an earnestness which breathed the silent energy of the student and throbbed in the soul-energy of the preacher.

He recognized that there was

the breadth of a continent between seriousness and sadness. He was a serious man. He had time for the poorest, but he would not make poor use of even a moment of time to please the proudest.

Universal admiration for such a man is the holy homage of an honest world to the living worth of an earnest church.

Bishop Brooks may have a successor. Phillips Brooks will have no successor.

He has bequeathed to the world the crown of his character.

The bright gem of his individuality will flash forever in the diadem of New England. In his name is congested the religious achievement of a generation.

He labored to make this world good enough for men to live in. He labored to make men good enough to live in such a world as this. The dream of his heart was of a world made to image God, and men made in the image of God.

He was faithful in that which was least. He crowned the insignificant as significant. That which was small seemed to sustain a vital relation to all.

His presence breathed an atmosphere of the holy place ; and ever and anon, as with the inspired hand of a prophet, he seemed to draw aside the veil of the temple, whose mysterious folds hang midway between the holy and the most holy — between the present and the possible—as if his soul sought to catch a glimpse of the “things which must shortly come to pass.”

He left us on the cold morning of a winter's day. The spirits of the north wind, as if touched by the warm radiance of his humanity, spread a white covering over all the earth, while his glorified spirit

swiftly passed from our presence into the city of the Great King.

He has thrown off the great cloak of his humanity, and stands at this very moment robed in the priestly garments of his transfiguration in a temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Hush! Our century is dying. The last child of time is passing away. Seven pages more, and the last and best chapter of human achievement will be complete.

One by one the beacon lights are flashing out. One by one the altar fires are growing dim. One by one the great spirits of a great generation are quietly taking leave of us, as though they would silently steal away, and with the united torch of their splendid individuality, light up a pathway for their own dear century — the crowning century and the crown of all the centuries — as it rolls backward into the bosom of the eternal.

The greatest monument to a mighty man is this : that his spirit should be multiplied in the lives

of manly men, and as young men our highest tribute to the blessed memory of our loved and revered Phillips Brooks shall be that at the altar of his magnificent manhood the young men of New England shall kindle the torches of holy ambition, and, holding them aloft, signal to the sons of men the approach of a new century.



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